



**News from**

# **Congressman Ron Kind**

**REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT**

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## **Cong. Kind Announces \$3.5 Million for Necedah Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center**

**Washington, DC** – Today, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind announced the inclusion of \$3.518 million in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service FY07 federal budget for the construction of a Refuge Headquarters and Visitor's Center at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) near Necedah, Wisconsin.

The new Headquarters and Visitor's Center will improve the quality and capacity of the Refuge to engage children and adults alike in the diverse wildlife and recreation available on the 44,000-acre refuge. More than 160,000 hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts already visit the refuge each year, and visitors from around the world come for the annual Whooping Crane Festival highlighting the Necedah NWR's internationally-renown whooping crane reintroduction program. Until now, the refuge has had only a small one-room reception area to greet and orient visitors.

"This new center will put the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge on the map as the premiere center for recreation and education," said Rep. Kind, an avid sportsman and the founder and co-chair of the National Wildlife Refuge Caucus in Washington. "I enjoy nothing more than exploring a refuge with my wife and two little boys, and this funding will allow even more families to experience the tremendous beauty of this jewel tucked away in central Wisconsin."

The new Center will seek to connect people with the Refuge through the use of exhibits, dioramas, and narratives in hopes of promoting increased exploration of the Refuge and a sense of stewardship and environmental responsibility among visitors. The increased work space will also allow the Refuge to expand its community outreach and educational programs.

Rep. Kind has championed the effort to secure funding for this center, recognizing its potential to expand the Refuge's reach to a greater number of people, and for educating the conservationists of the future. Rep. Kind has requested appropriations for center for the last three years, and urged the Office of Management and Budget to include funding for the visitor's center in the President's budget as well.

"Rep. Kind has given this project incredible support over the years, and it has finally paid off," said Necedah National Wildlife Refuge Manager Larry Wargowsky. "This will be a great addition to the refuge and a tremendous asset to the citizens of Necedah and all the communities of Juneau County."

*(more)*

Necedah National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1939 as a Refuge for migratory waterfowl and resident wildlife, and has since expanded to meet the needs of a number of endangered species including the gray wolf, whooping crane, and the Karner Blue butterfly. Necedah National Wildlife Refuge is at the forefront of restoration for an Eastern U.S. population for migratory whooping cranes, and the new Refuge Headquarters and Visitor's Center will help meet the intense public interest in its projects.

"This project has remained a priority, even during this time of constrained budgets in the National Wildlife Refuge System, because we recognize the long-term importance of providing services to the American public that help them connect with our Nation's spectacular natural resources," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Midwest Regional Director Robyn Thorson.

Rep. Kind also acknowledged everyone involved in securing funding for this project including his colleagues in the Wisconsin Congressional delegation Rep. David Obey, Senator Herb Kohl, Senator Russ Feingold, as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Friends of the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, the Village of Necedah, the Necedah Lions Club, and numerous other organizations that have given tremendous support to the Refuge over the years.